



Western Avenue Corridor Study and Rezoning

Transportation and Multi-Modal Improvements

June 29, 2021

Staff Introductions & New Key Contacts

****Thank you Gerald Autler!**** ****Congrats Rosa Herrero de Andres!****

Joe Blankenship: BPDA Transportation - joseph.blankenship@boston.gov

Matt Martin: BPDA Urban Design - matthew.martin@boston.gov

Ocean Lou: BPDA Neighborhood Planning - ocean.lou@boston.gov

Matt Moran: BTM Transit - matthew.moran@boston.gov



Agenda

1. Introduction & Housekeeping
2. April & May Public Feedback & How We're Addressing
3. Updated Transportation Analysis
4. Multimodal Concepts
5. Next Steps



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Introductions & Housekeeping

Project Website

bit.ly/westerncorridor

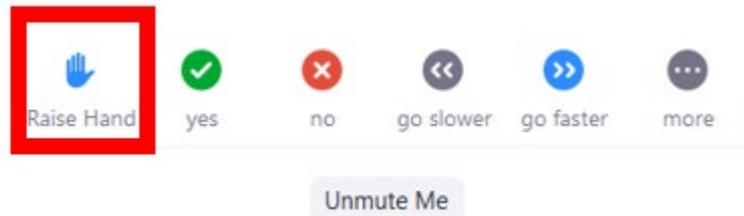
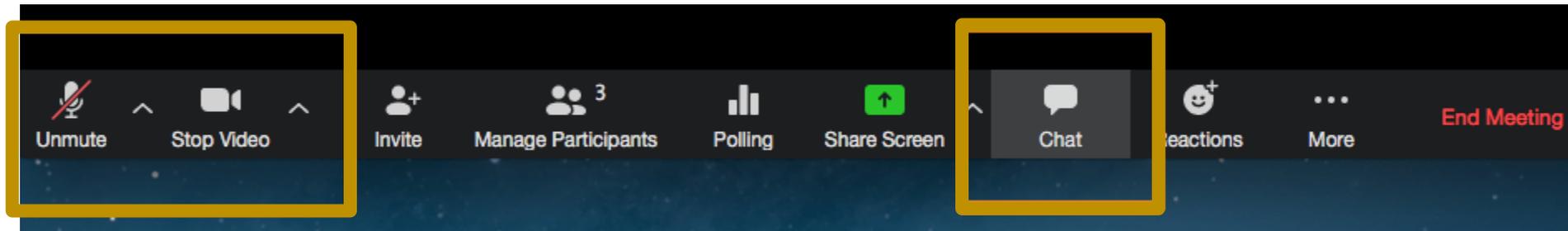
- Presentations (including tonight's!)
- Recordings from virtual meetings
- Project documents (e.g. Zoning Toolkit and Housing Toolkit)



Zoom Tips

Your controls should be available at the bottom of the screen.

Clicking on these symbols activates different features:

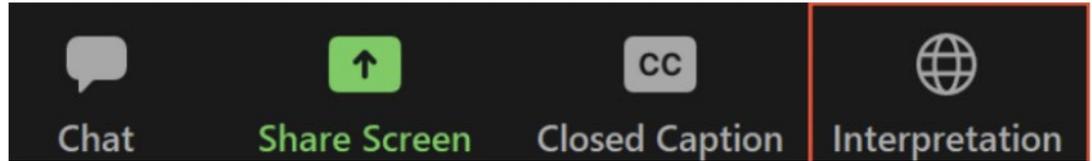


Interpretation

This meeting will have the following interpretation:

- Chinese - Cantonese

Everyone must select a language



Virtual Meeting Protocols

- During the presentation you can ask questions through the chat feature. Depending on the question, we will answer it in writing in the chat box, verbally, or wait until the Q&A period.
- Following the presentation there will be time for verbal Q&A. Please be respectful of each other's time so that all may participate in the discussion.
- You can always set up a conversation with the project team through Joe Blankenship, joseph.blankenship@boston.gov.



Meeting Recording

- The BPDA will be recording this meeting and posting it on its website at bit.ly/WesternCorridor. The recording will include the presentation, Q&A, and public comments afterwards.
- Also, it is possible that participants may be recording the meeting with their phone cameras or other devices.
- If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.



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April & May Public Feedback & How We're Addressing

Transportation Related Feedback from April and May

1. Concerns about impacts of new development in Watertown
2. Questions about pick-up, drop-off, & loading
3. Desire for bolder transit options

How We Are Addressing

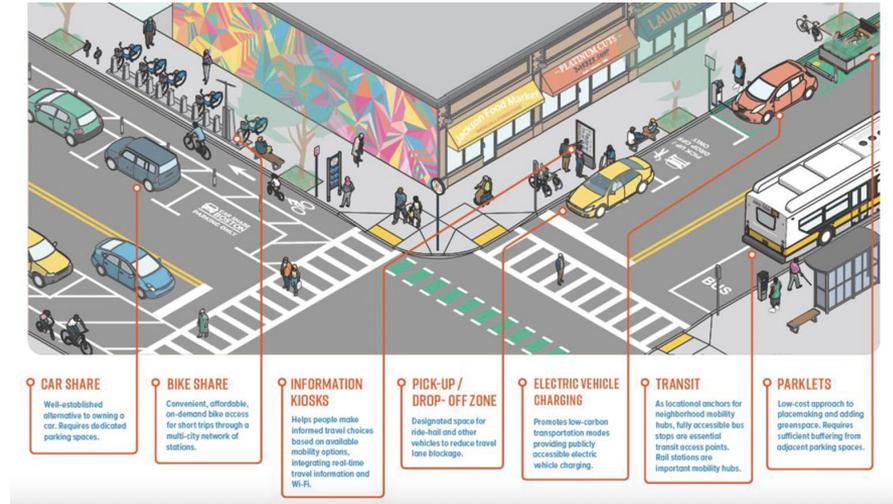
1) *Concerns about impacts of **new development in Watertown***

- Expanded consultant capacity
- Analyzing impacts of new development in Watertown

How We Are Addressing

2) Questions about **pick-up, drop-off, and loading**

- Working with BTD - GoHubs as example
- Exploring ways to integrate with long-term transit improvements
- Elements can be addressed through Article 80 review

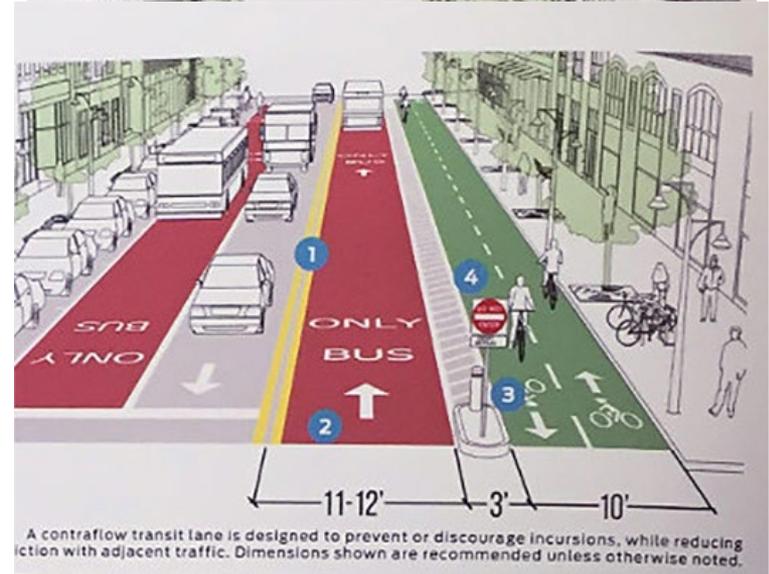


Example GoHub Image: BTD

How We Are Addressing

3) Desire for **bolder transit options** along Western Avenue

- Developing and testing concept called a **Transitway**
- Coordinating closely with DCR and MBTA



Example Transitway Image: NACTO

Phased Multimodal Concepts

1. **Buffered Bike Lanes** - 2 years

1. **Alternating Bus Lanes** - 5-15 years

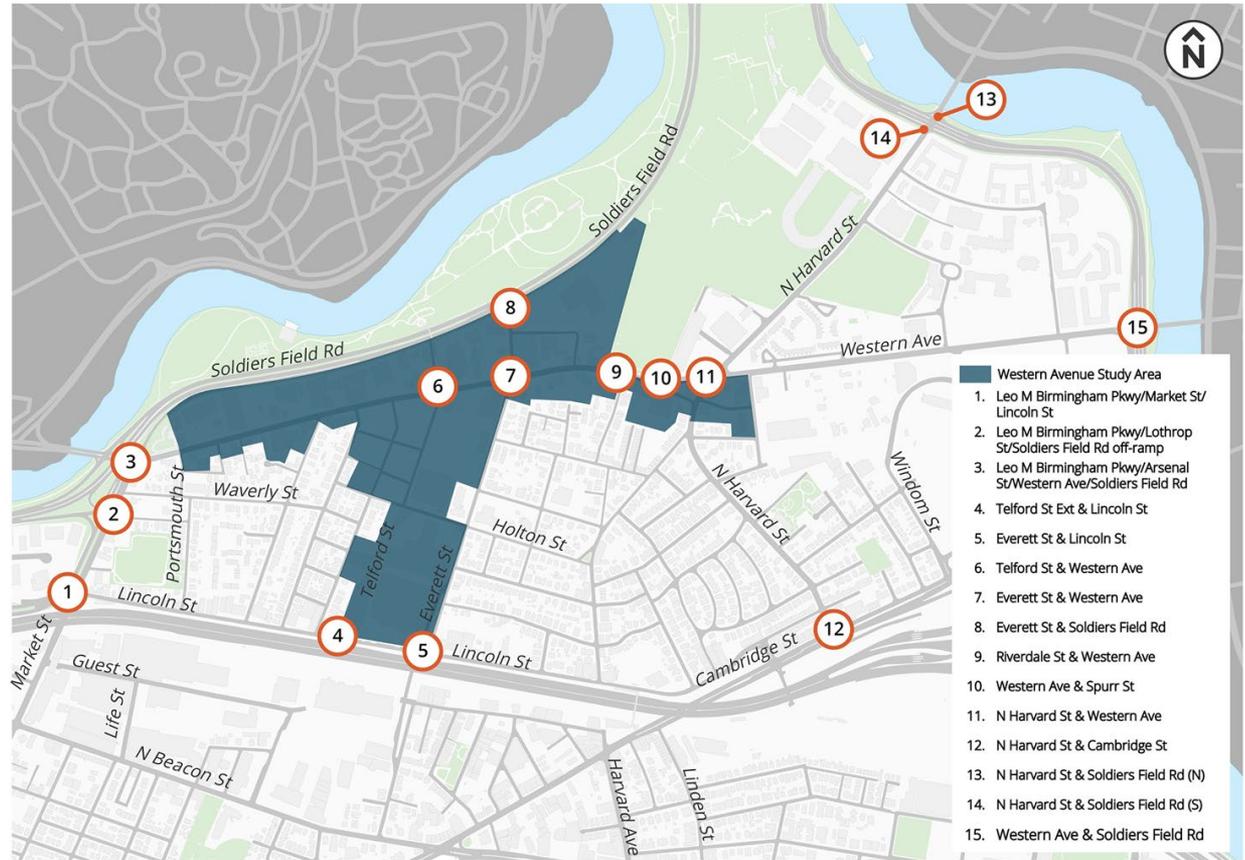
1. **Transitway** - Potential Near Term Pilot & Long Term

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Updated Transportation Analysis

Transportation Analysis

- Informed the zoning strategy and long-term buildout



Identifying Zoning Strategies

- Different zoning strategies change the number and type of trips
- Three key characteristics:



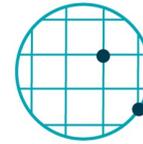
Land Use Type

(E.g., residential vs. commercial)



Land Use Quantity

(i.e., total amount of development allowed)



Land Use Location

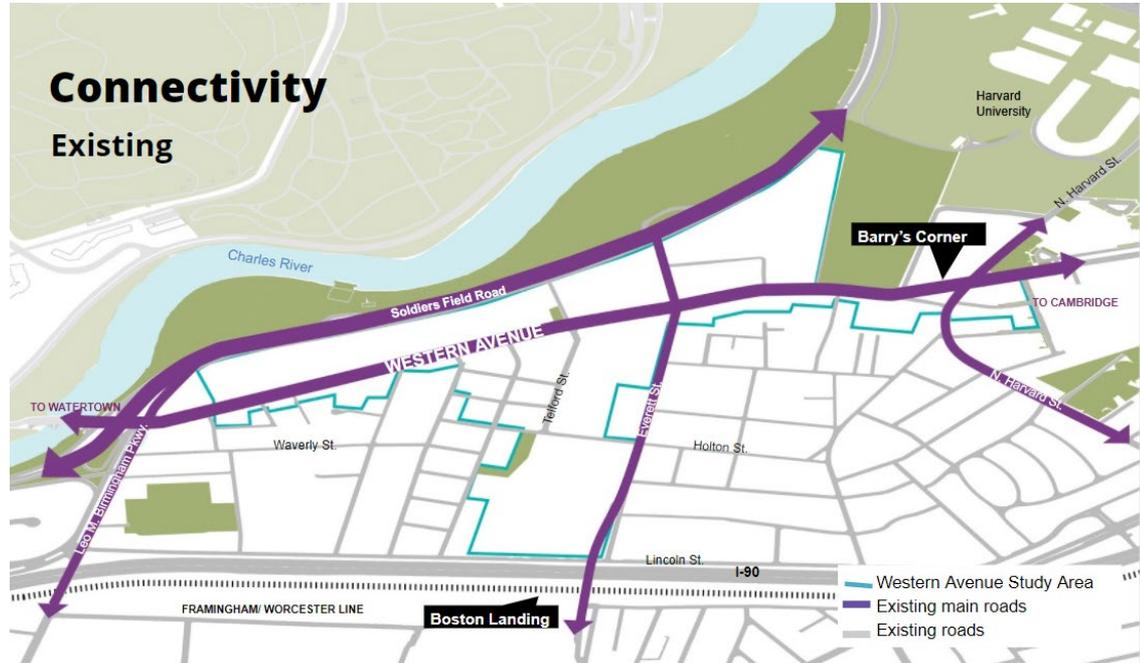
(e.g., center vs. edge of the street network)

Change the number of trips and times of day that trips take place

Changes how trips move through the street network

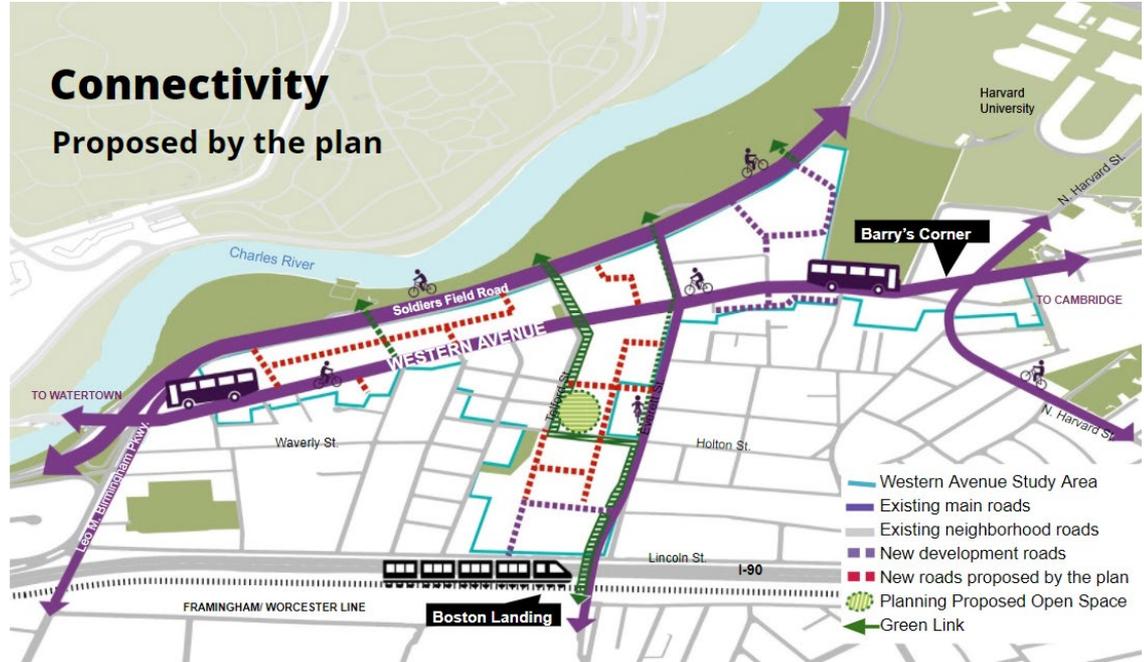
Modeling Assumptions

- Transportation and land use changes
- Variables include:
 - New streets
 - Approved developments



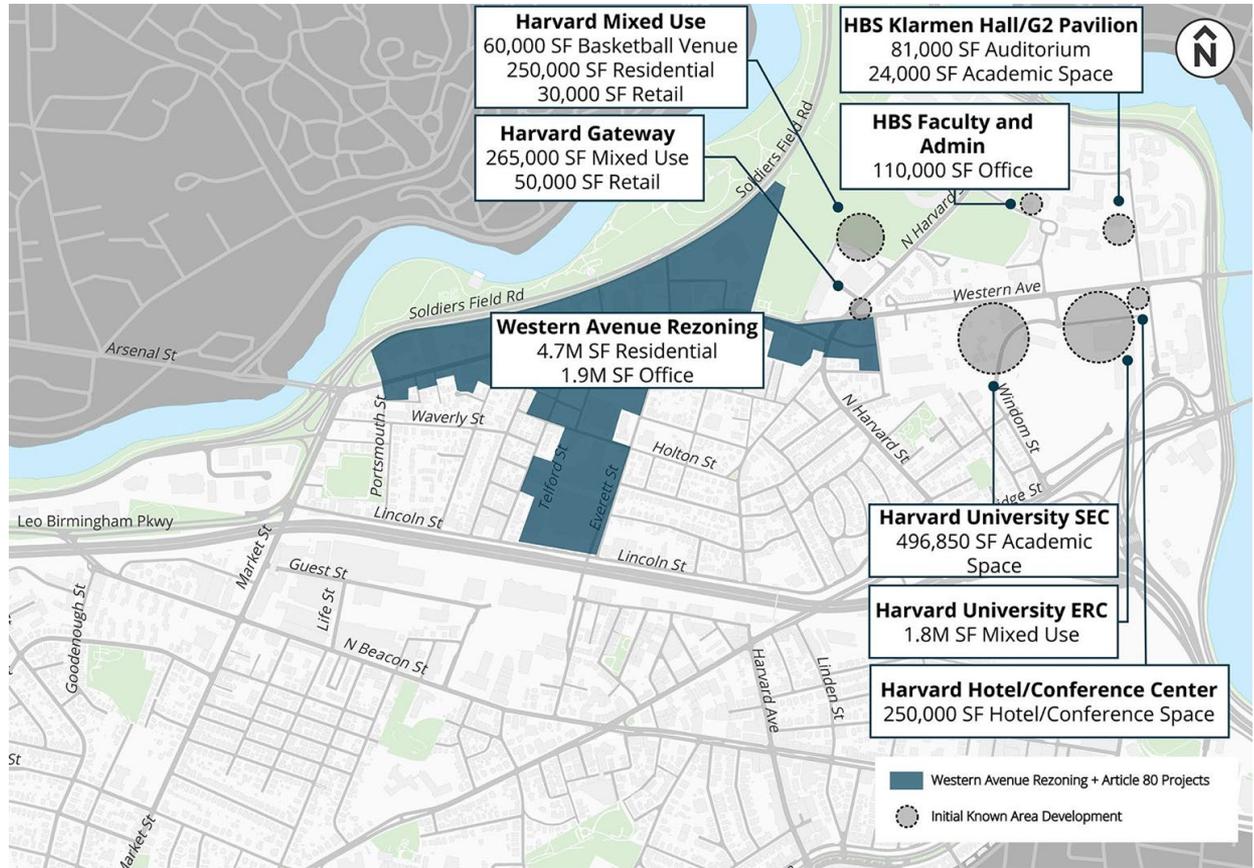
Modeling Assumptions

- Transportation and land use changes
- Variables include:
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 - Approved developments



Initial Modeling Assumptions

Western Avenue Rezoning
6.6M SF
Initial Known Area Development
3.4M SF



Updates to Modeling Assumptions

Western Avenue Rezoning

6.6M SF

Initial Known Area Development

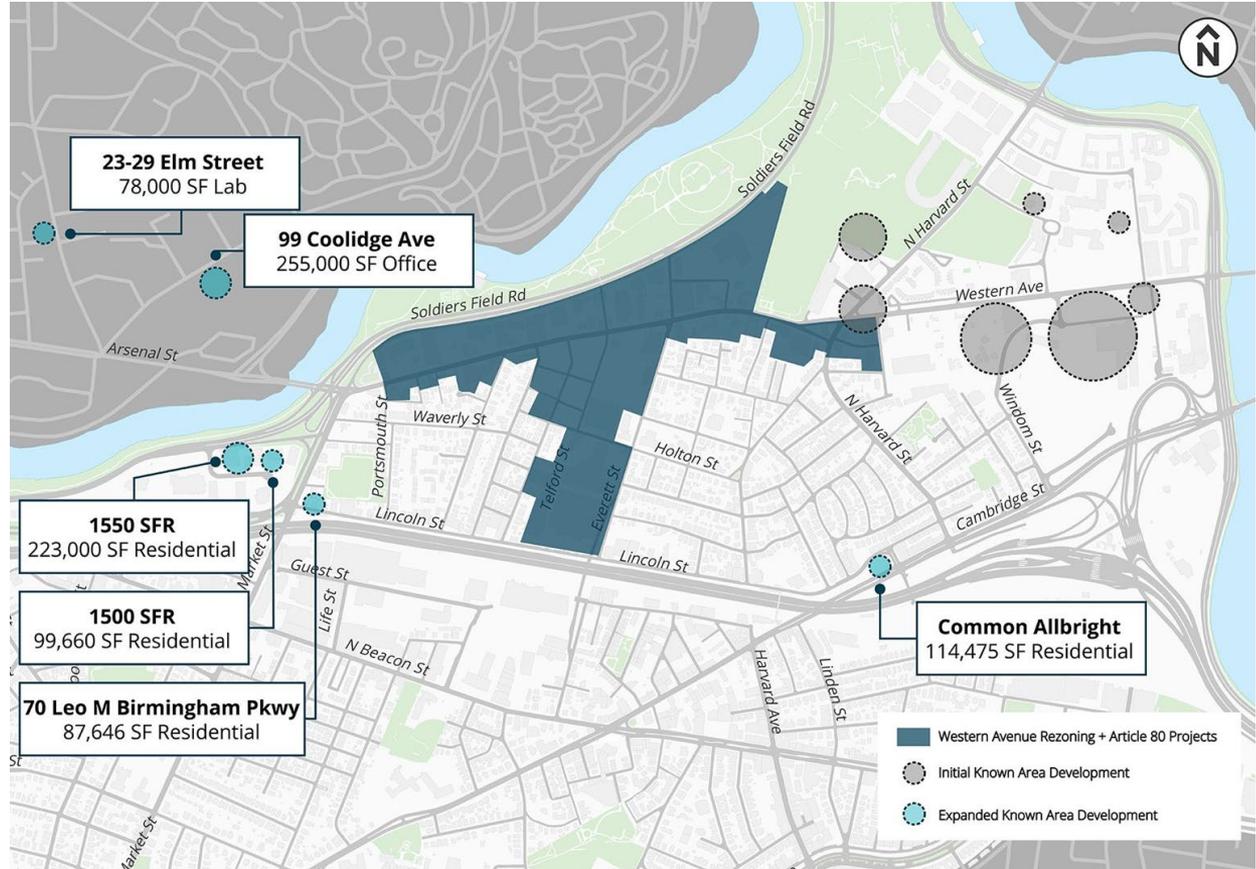
3.4M SF

Expanded Known Area Development

858K SF

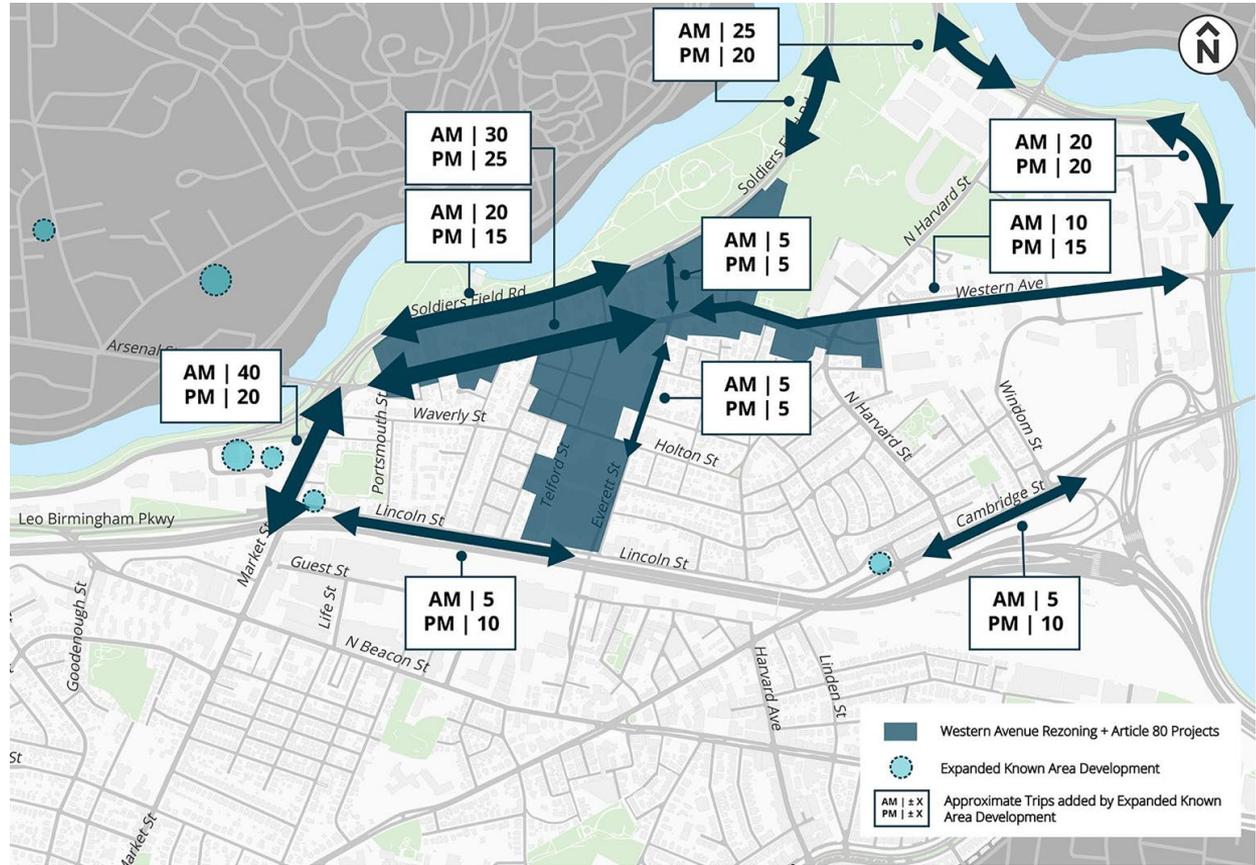
Watertown projects with no traffic impacts

- 64 Pleasant Street
- The Arsenal on the Charles
- Arsenal Yards
- 66 and 84-52 Galen Street



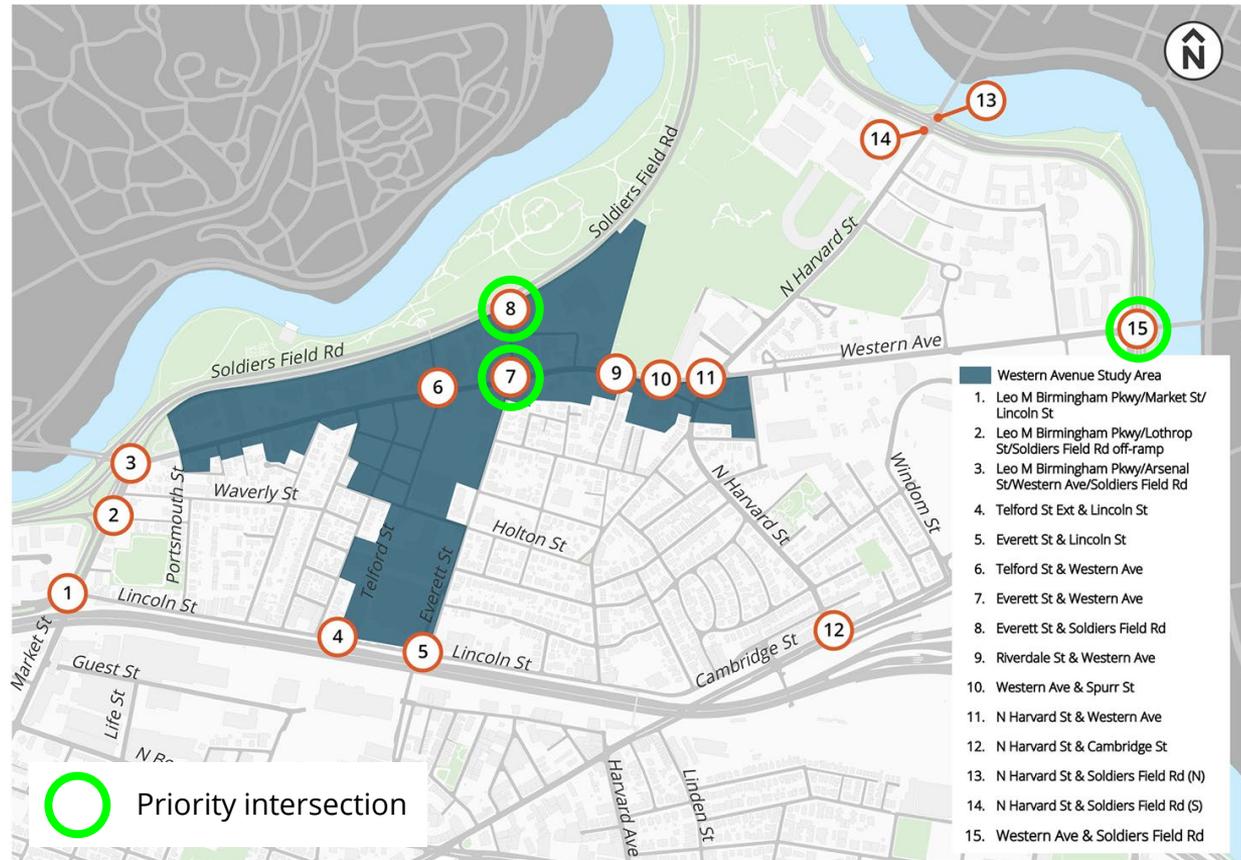
Updates to Modeling Assumptions

- Add ± 100 vehicle trips to the network in both AM and PM peak periods



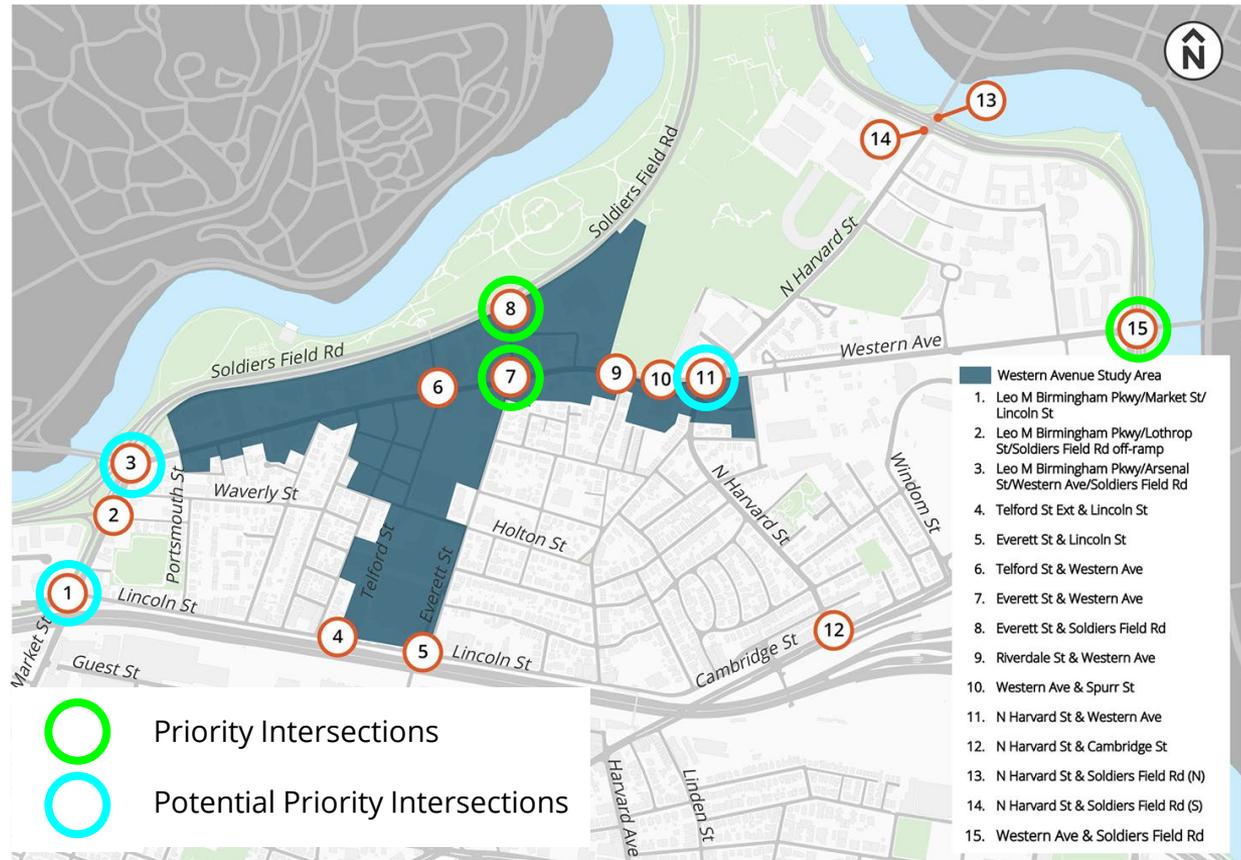
Measuring Impacts at Key Intersections

- We tested the effects of different zoning strategies on 15 intersections



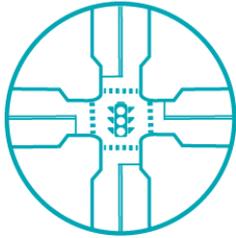
Measuring Impacts at Key Intersections

- We are updating the analysis to include trips from additional developments



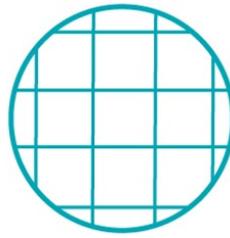
Next Steps: Testing Additional Changes

- Identify and test additional changes to the street network to support all future users and uses



Intersection Changes

- Signal timing modifications
- Lane geometry adjustments



Network Changes

- New streets
- Space for biking and transit



Transportation Demand Management

- Strategies that enable people to walk, bike, and take transit instead of drive

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Multimodal Concepts for Western Avenue

Objectives of Corridor Study

- Create a **compelling vision** for the Study Area
- **Recommend zoning** informed by that vision (and grounded in financial analysis and transportation modeling)
- Propose **multimodal improvements** to Western Avenue and other transportation enhancements

Public Process To Date - What We Heard



Workshop, October 30, 2019

Results from 2019 Workshop:

- 1. Buffered/Protected bike lane**
- 2. Bus lane**
- 3. Bike lane**

Highest
Priorities

4. Planting zone
5. On-street parking
6. Bus/Bike lane
7. *Street furnishing zone*
8. *Cafe seating zone*

Public Process To Date - What We Heard



Workshop, October 30, 2019

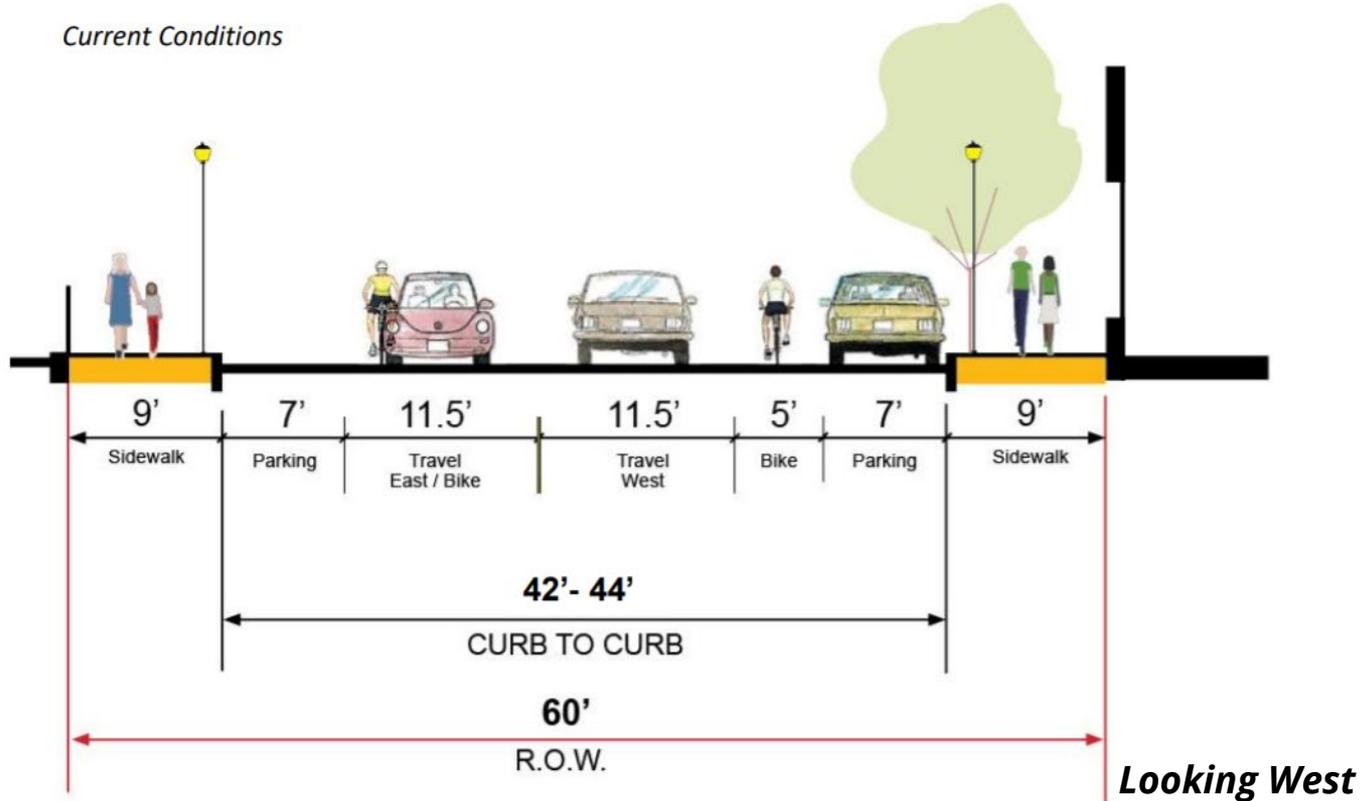
April/May 2021 Public Feedback:

- 1. Bolder Transit Vision**
- 2. Impacts of new development in Watertown**

Existing Right-of-Way

Typical Cross-Section

Current Conditions



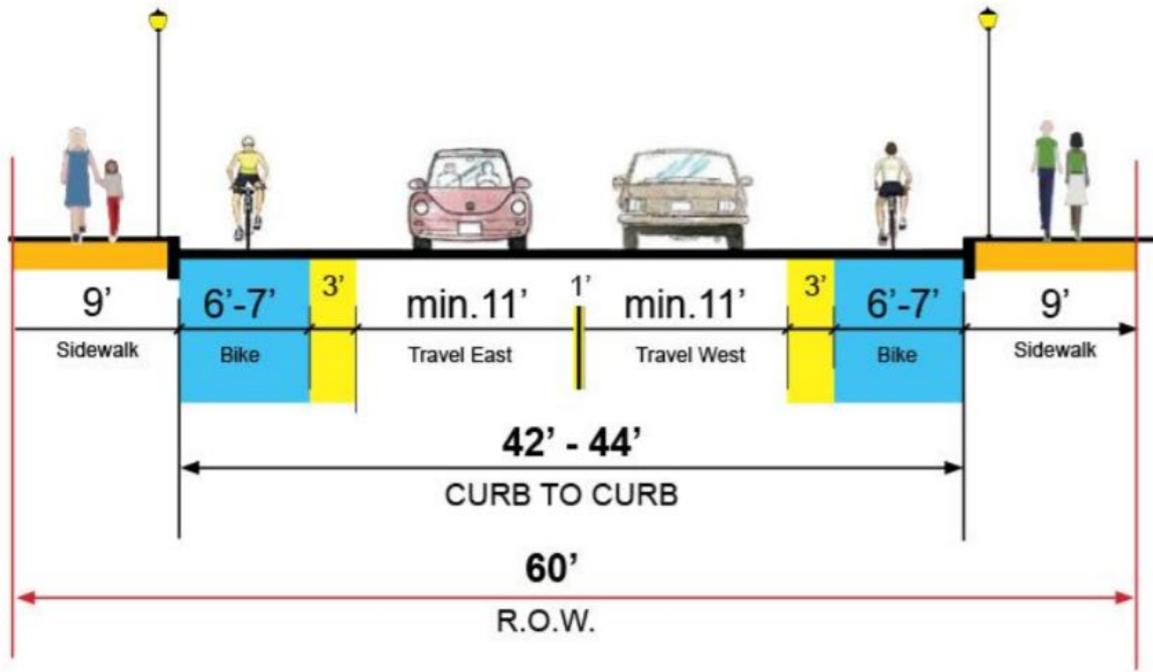
Concept 1: Buffered Bike Lanes

- Implementation within ~2 years
- Lifespan 5-15 years
- Reallocate **existing right-of-way**:
 - **Strategic bus improvements**, e.g. consolidation of stops, accessibility, queue jumps, transit signal priority
 - **Better bicycle facilities**
 - **Pedestrian improvements**, e.g. new or improved crosswalks



Concept 1: Proposed Cross-Section

General Approach



Looking West

Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes & Protected Bike Lanes

- Timeframe: 5-15+ years
- Bike lanes stay
- Additional 15 foot setbacks with new development
- Northern curb moves by 3 feet

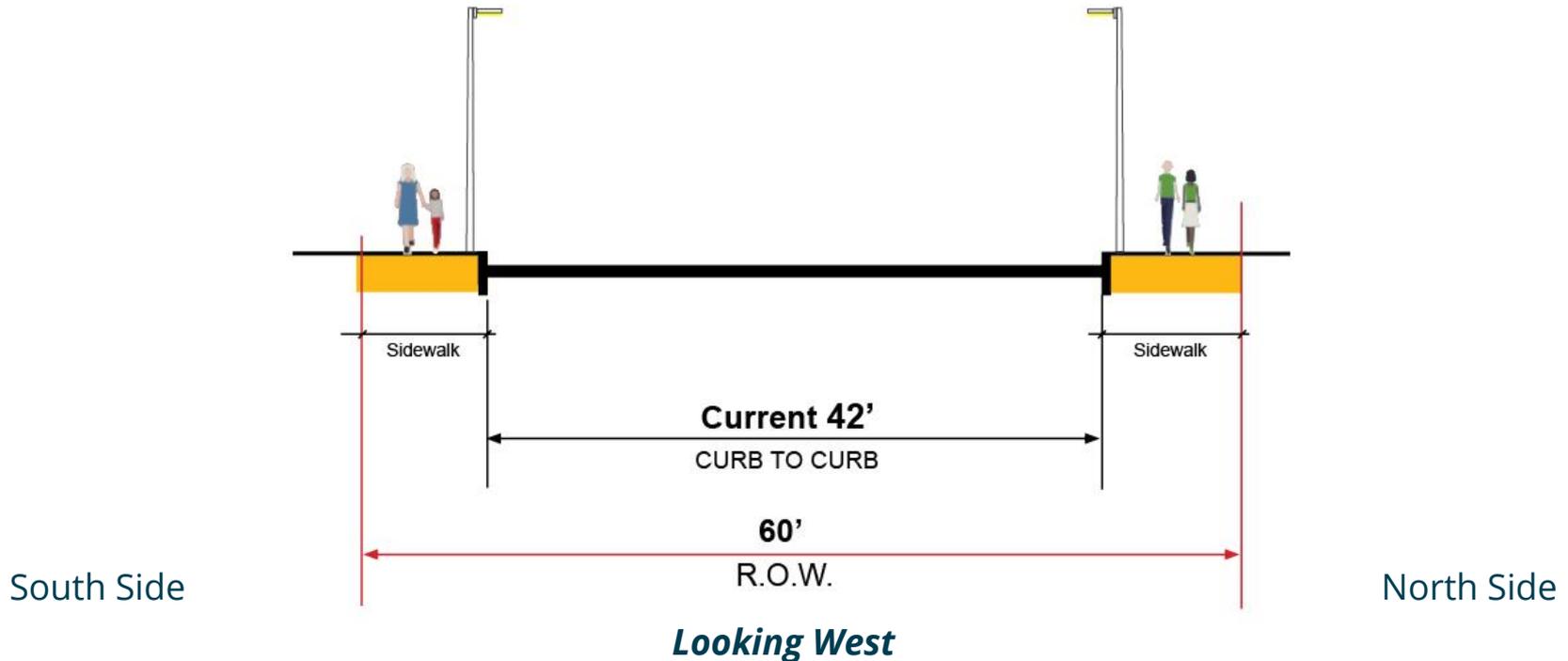


Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes



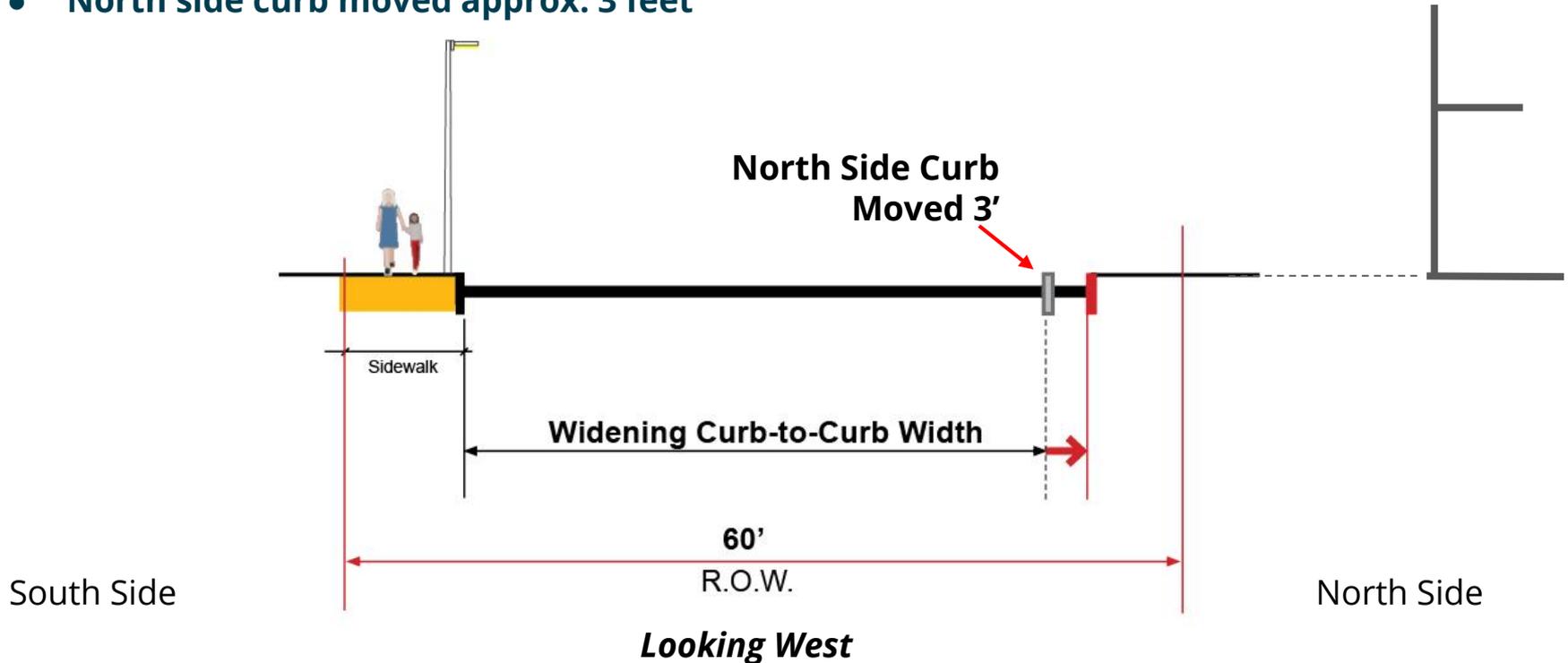
Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

- Currently 42 feet of Curb-to-Curb



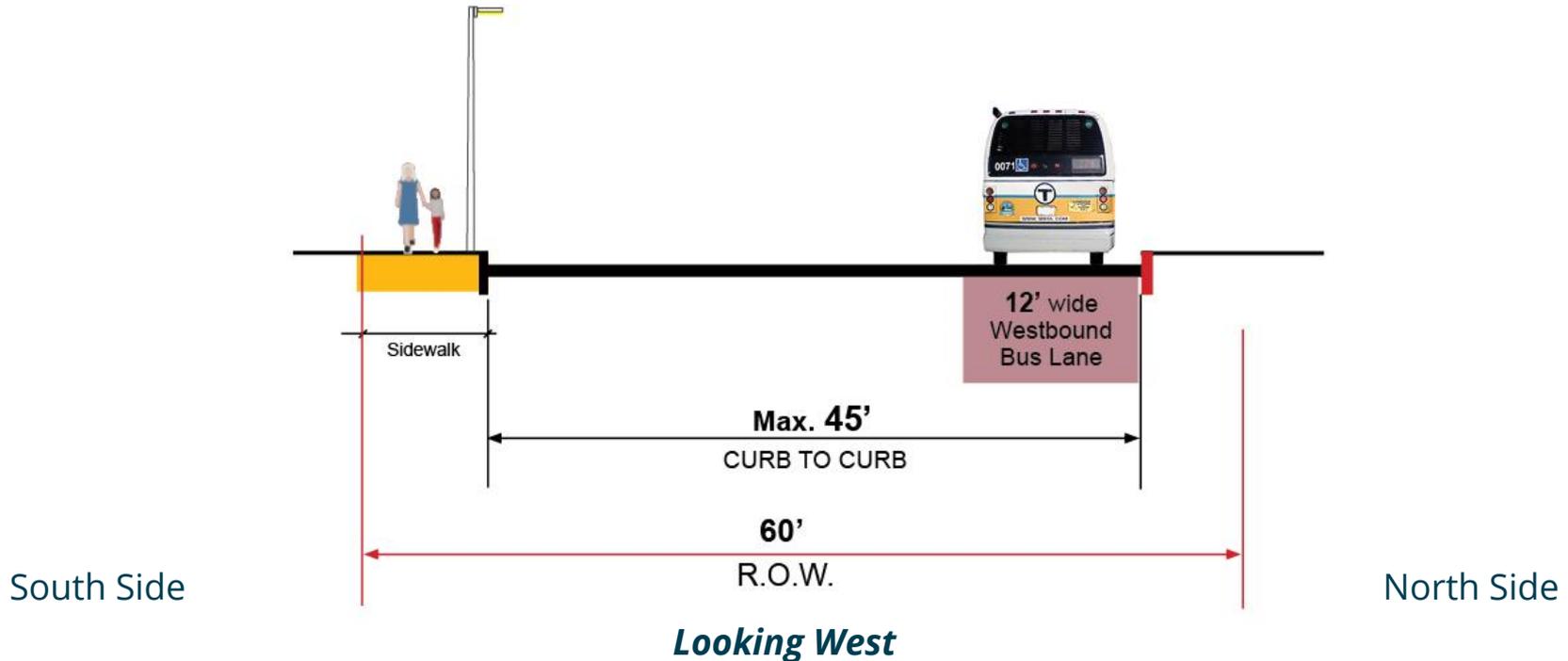
Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

- Opportunity comes with future development on north side
- South side curb held constant
- North side curb moved approx. 3 feet



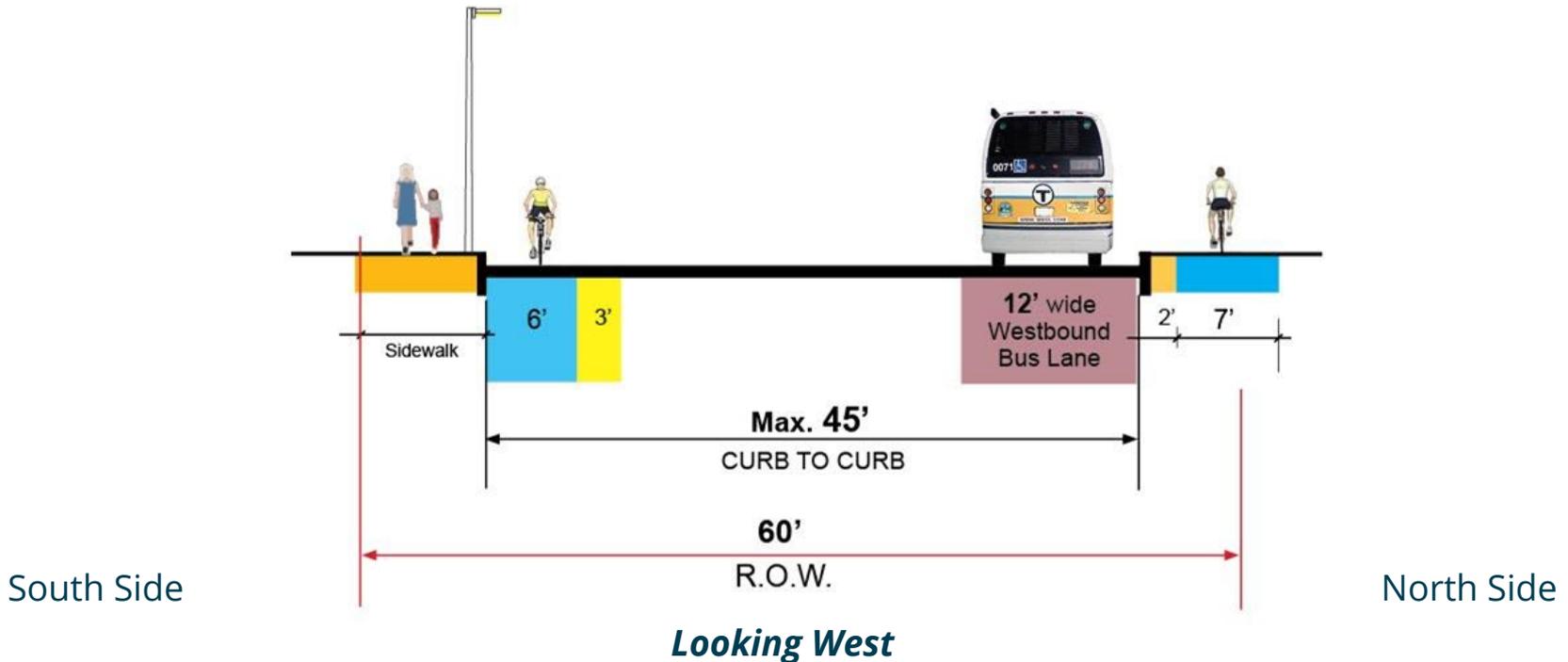
Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

- 12' wide Westbound bus lane along the northern side curb



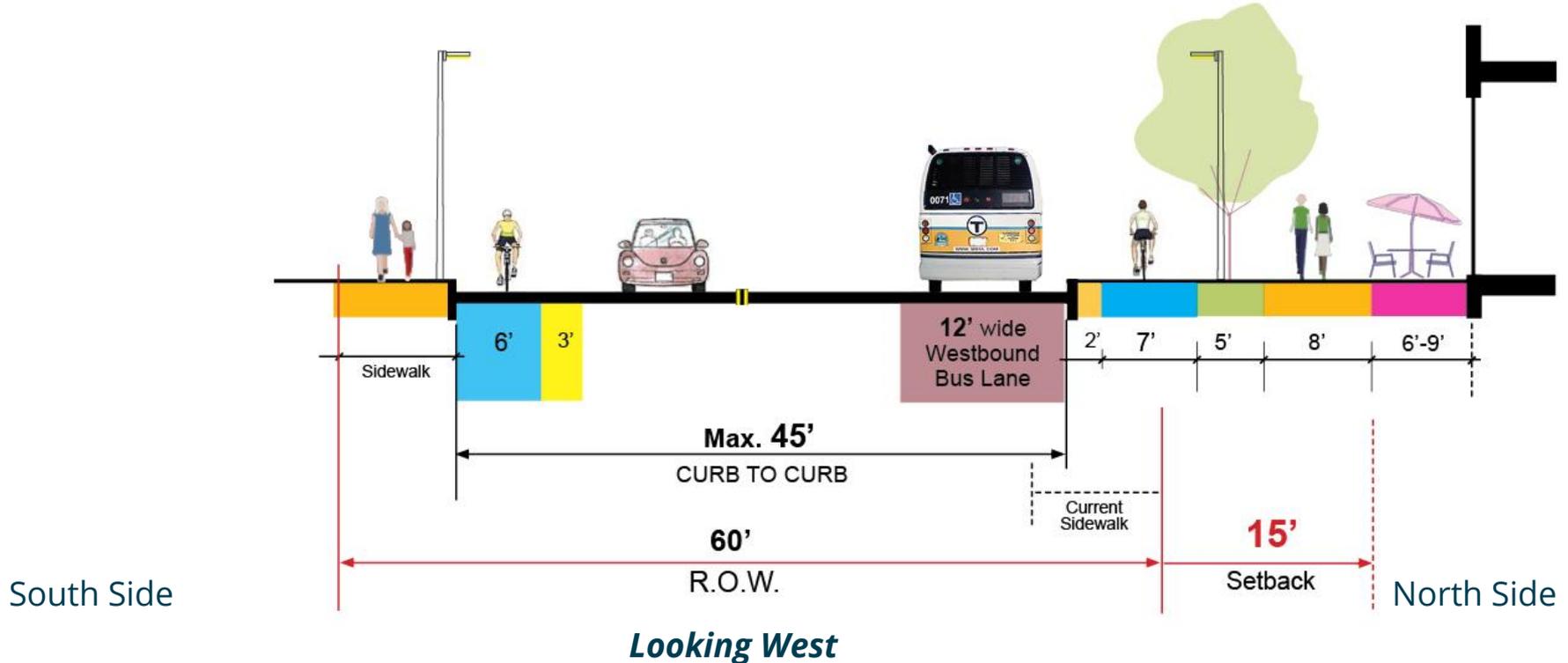
Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

- Sidewalk-level bike lane on north side
- Buffered bike lane on south side



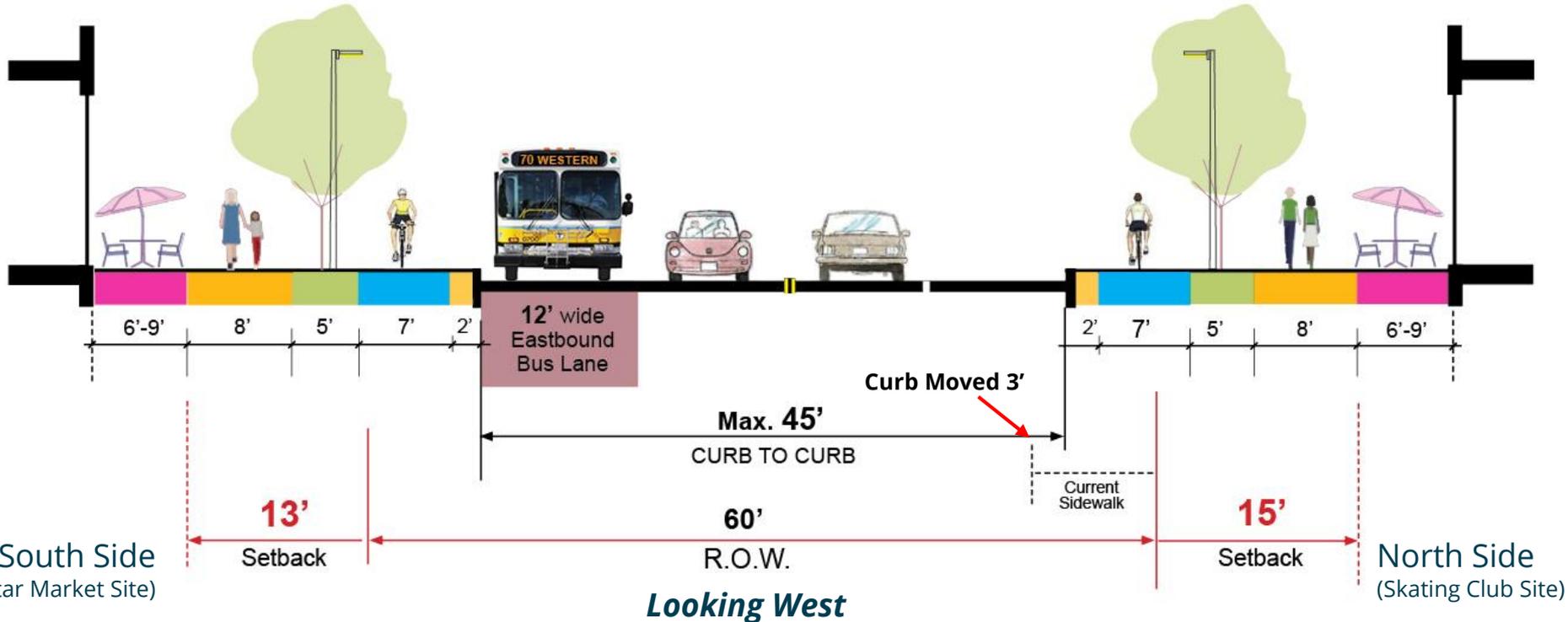
Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

- Enhanced streetscape design w/ landscape & cafe zones
- Outdoor seating or additional landscape



Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

- 12' wide Eastbound bus lane along the southern side curb
- Sidewalk-level bike lane on both sides & Enhanced streetscape design w/ landscape & cafe zones



Concept 2: Alternating Bus Lanes

Everett - Antwerp Streets



Concept 3: Transitway

- **What is a Transitway?**
 - Dedicated way for transit vehicles
 - Redirects regional traffic
 - Reduces delay and increases reliability
 - Increases safety



Image: NYC DOT via NACTO Twitter

Concept 3: Transitway

- *Why explore a Transitway here?*
 - Increases transit capacity & person throughput
 - Has worked elsewhere
 - Aligns with City mode share goals



Image: NYC DOT via NACTO Twitter

Transitway Example: Market Street

- Bans through traffic
- Prioritizes non-autos
- Works with parallel roads
- Trucks and deliveries use series of intersecting streets

Market Street BEFORE



Market Street AFTER



Concept 3: Western Ave Transitway

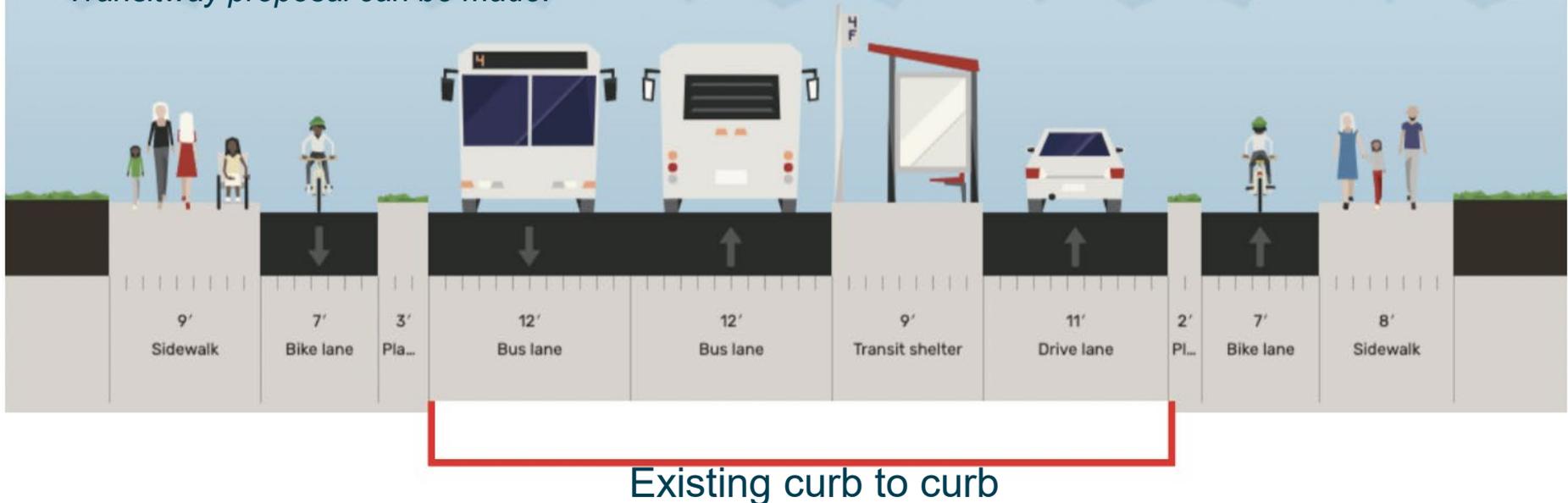
- Prioritizes transit movements
- Retains protected bike lanes
- Redirects regional truck & general vehicul traffic
 - General vehicle traffic utilizes SFR
 - Truck traffic on Lincoln St and/or Western Ave
- Local deliveries accommodated on Western Ave
- ***Testing and exploring feasibility for Western Avenue***



Western Ave Transitway - Long Term Concept*

- Dimension added for second bus lane & shelter
- This concept moves bikes and peds to sidewalk level with additional setbacks

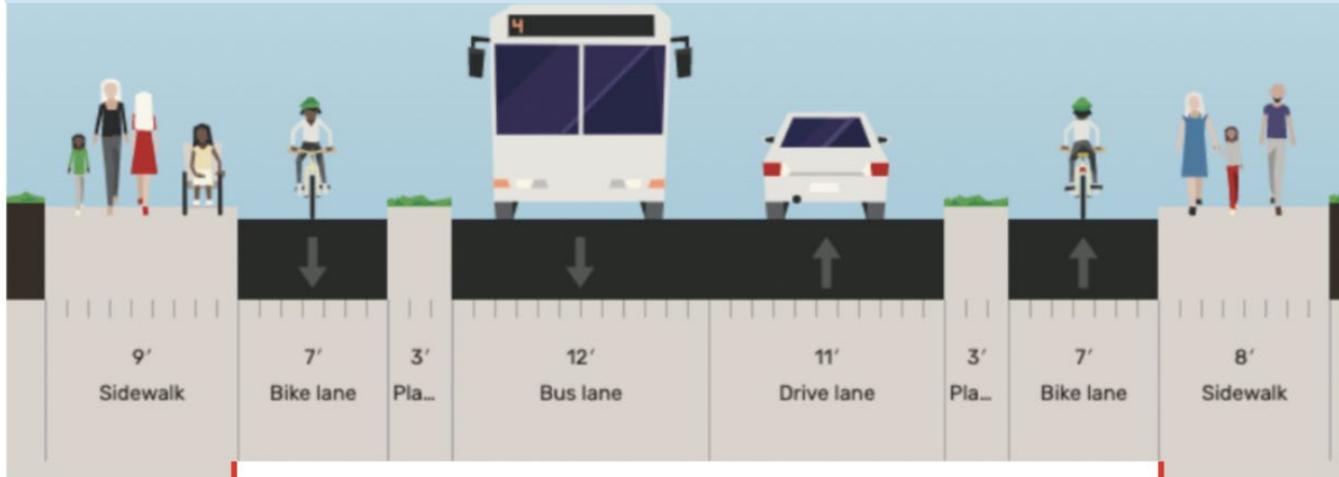
**Note: Image is for illustrative purposes; further development & testing are needed before a specific Transitway proposal can be made.*



Western Ave Transitway - Near Term Pilot Concept*

*Note: This is an early concept requiring further analysis and **testing/piloting**.

**Note: Image is for illustrative purposes; further development & testing are needed before a specific Transitway proposal can be made.*



Existing curb to curb

Western Ave Transitway - Example Routing

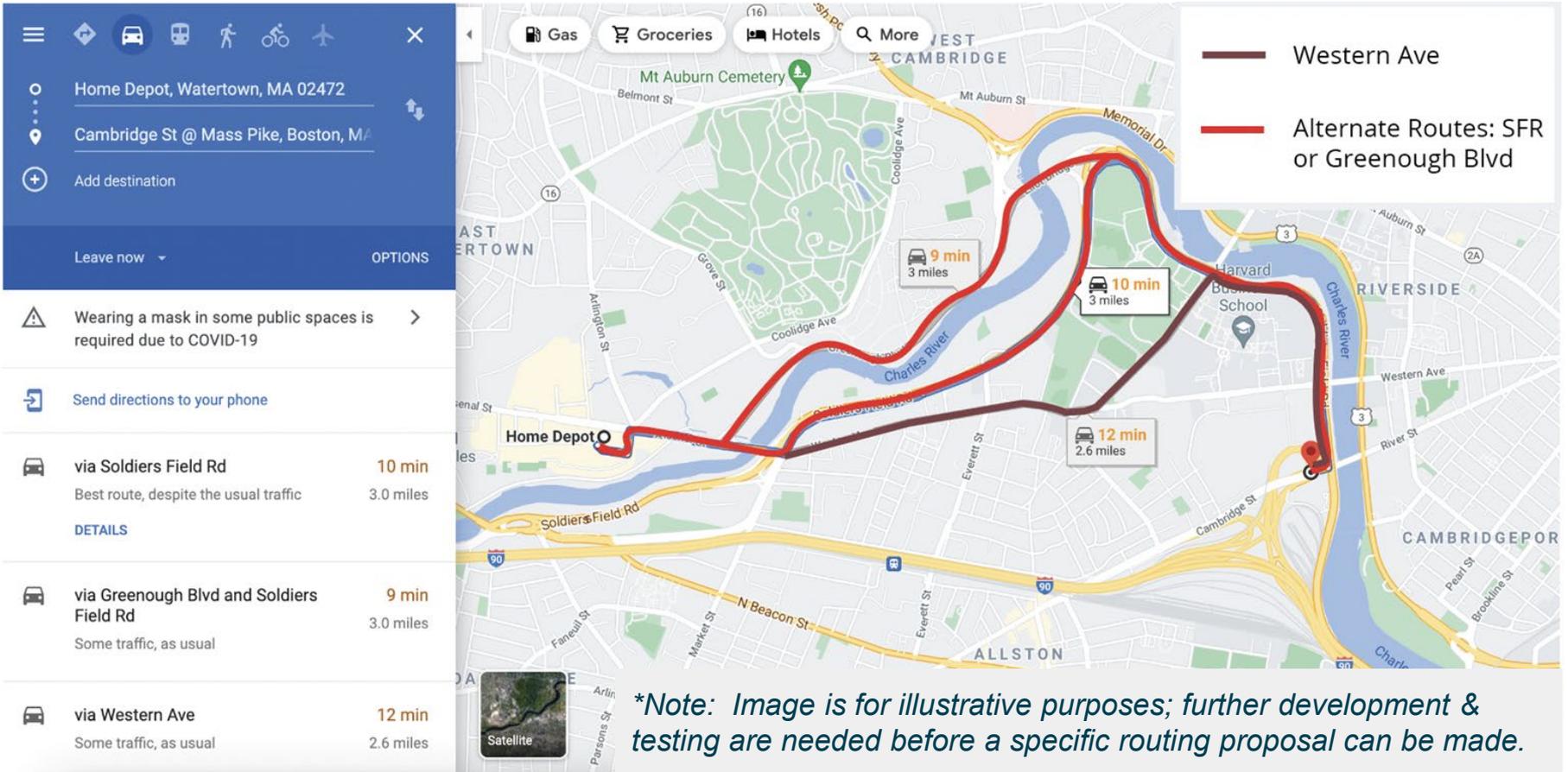
-  Western Ave
-  Alternate Route: SFR



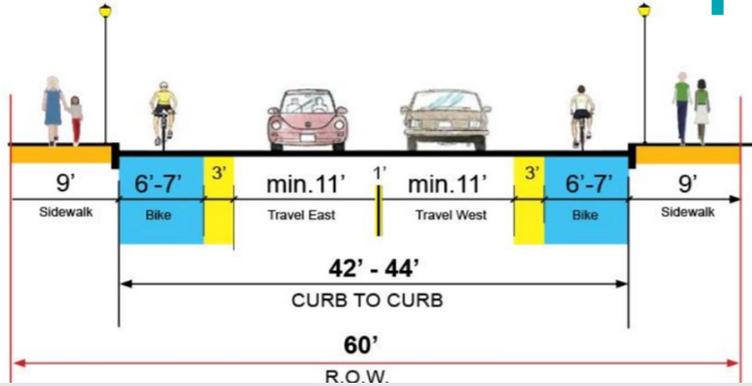
- Example local trip from Home Depot to Pavement Coffeehouse

**Note: Image is for illustrative purposes; further development & testing are needed before a specific routing proposal can be made.*

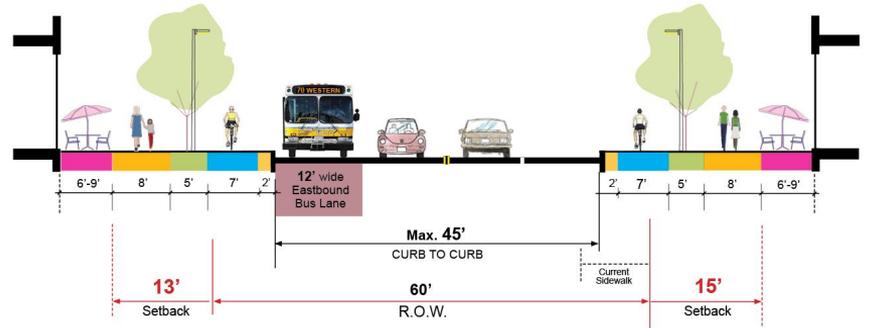
Western Ave Transitway - Example Routing



Multimodal Concepts Summary



1 - Buffered Bike Lane



2 - Alternating Bus Lane

**Note: Image is for illustrative purposes; further development & testing are needed before a specific Transitway proposal can be made.*



3 - Transitway

Phased Multimodal Concepts

1. **Buffered Bike Lanes** - ~2 years

- Could be done very quickly

1. **Alternating Bus Lanes** - 5-15 years

- Would require building setbacks with redevelopment over time

1. **Transitway** - Potential Near Term Pilot & Long Term

- Requires further testing
- Would require building setbacks with redevelopment over time for long term version

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Next Steps

Other Elements Under Evaluation

- Barry's Corner Public Realm - Builds off of Work in North Allston Plan
- Work towards full draft report in September



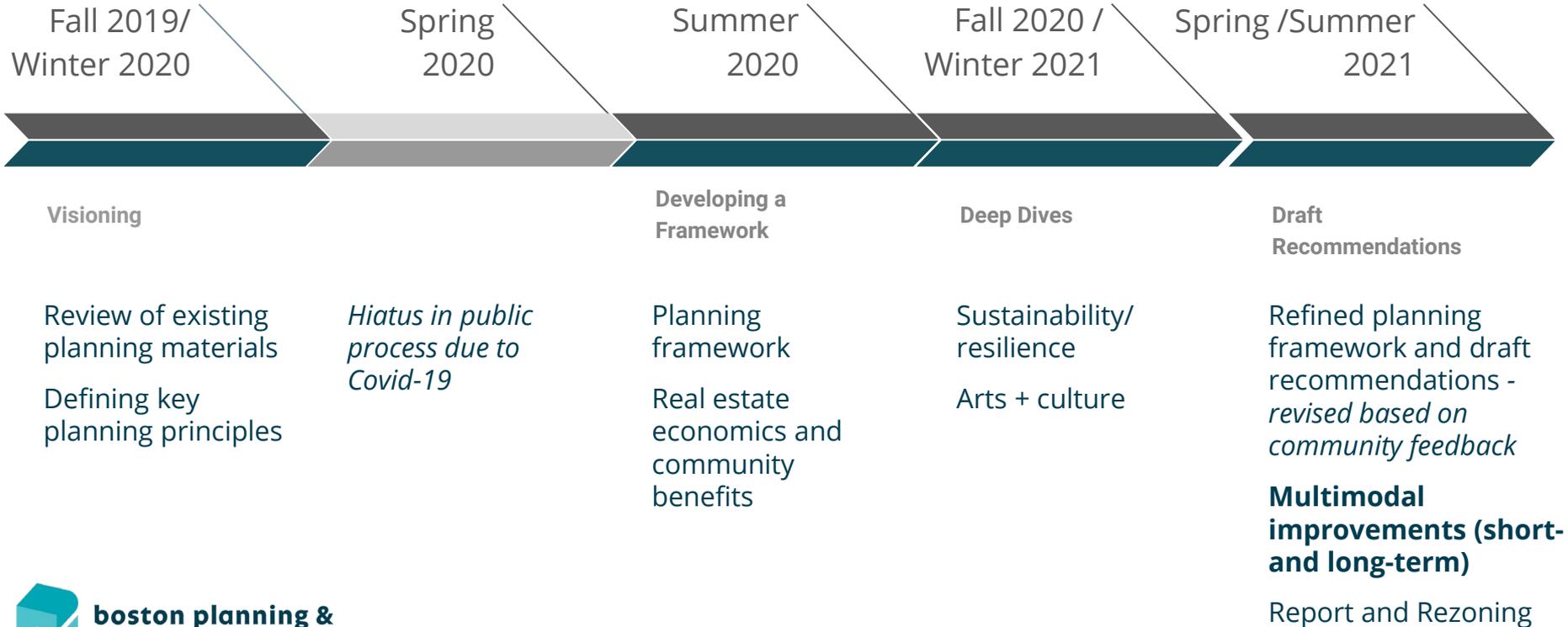
Barry's Corner building footprints and streets.

The intersection of North Harvard Street and Western Avenue transformed into Barry's Corner. Area has the potential for new public space along Smith Field (lower center); new mixed-use development – institutional, residential, and retail – along the eastern edge of the park, and new housing and neighborhood-serving retail along Western Avenue (from upper left to lower center) and North Harvard Street (from right to left center).

Study area plan showing location of Barry's Corner.



Next Steps



Thank you
Q&A
